

Health Department shifted federal HIV/AIDS money to other purposes

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Staff Writers

Over a period of several years, the state Health Department shifted some federal money into

programs it was never intended to fund. Now officials say the state Health Department faces a \$30 million funding shortfall this year, which could grow if the agency has to repay the

federal government. In August, the state Health Department was forced to end an \$8.5 million program with the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust that funded grants

for things like lighted walking trails at city parks and school playground equipment across the state, records show. The state Health Department ended the grant program after it

came dangerously close to missing a payment for a federally funded program to help treat HIV and AIDS patients. Since 2011, the state Health Department has spent \$4.9 million on

the Certified Healthy Oklahoma program. The state Health Department contracted with TSET to administer the grants and promote the program.

SEE MONEY, 2A

Grandparents again



Howard and Beverly Dow, top, center, pose for a photo Oct. 23 with their grandchildren, top, from left, Louis, 14, Triston, 10, and Day-Jamon, 12, bottom, from left, Preston, 9, Lillian, 8, Glenn, 6, Tra-Niece, 10, and Jaelon, 13, at Stars and Stripes Park in Oklahoma City. The Dows are raising their eight grandchildren. [PHOTO BY CHRIS LANDSBERGER, THE OKLAHOMAN]

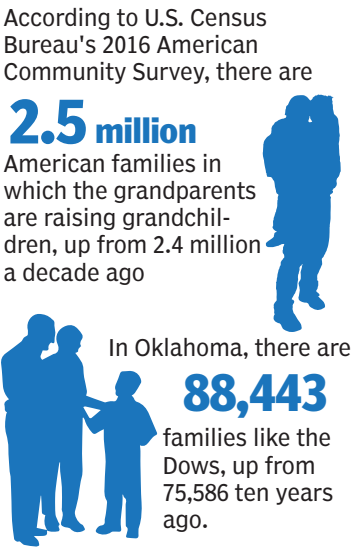
Elders raising grandchildren increasingly common in Oklahoma

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Beverly Dow remembers the call from child welfare. “Did my son-in-law kill my daughter?” she asked, bracing herself. No, was the response. But her five grandchildren were being starved to death. Dow picked them up and brought them to her home, where they have been ever since that cold day in February 2012. As fast as she could get food onto their plates, it was gone. “We’re not going to get anything else to eat,” Jaelon, then 7, told his brothers and sisters, urging them to eat fast.

“Their clothes were filthy. They were filthy,” Dow recalled. “It took us a week to get the dirt off of these children. I’m not exaggerating. A week. They were crying. They were hungry.” Dow, overwhelmed and angry at her own children, sat down and cried. But in the years since, she’s gotten stronger. She’s had to. The five children she took in 2012 joined three others she adopted from another daughter in 2008. Dow, 56, and her husband, Howard, 52, are together raising eight grandchildren, age 6 to 14, a scenario that in recent years has become more common, experts say. According to U.S. Census Bureau’s 2016

SEE RAISING, 13A



A private property sign hangs on a fence at 8828 SE 29 Street in Midwest City. [PHOTO BY JUSTIN WINGERTER, THE OKLAHOMAN]

State to probe second toxin site

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MIDWEST CITY — Facing questions from an anxious public, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality has begun investigating another Eagle Industries site after determining company employees illegally dumped cancer-causing toxins two miles away from a site previously investigated.

SEE PROBE, 6A

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- Williams Partners LP

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